

CY 70-5



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20591

January 29, 1970

A70-5

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

Honorable John H. Shaffer  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Department of Transportation  
Washington, D. C. 20590

Dear Mr. Shaffer:

Our investigation of a recent Catalina Seaplanes, Inc., air taxi accident indicated that some corrective measures may be necessary to prevent a similar, and possibly much more serious, accident in the future.

On March 7, 1969, a Catalina Seaplanes, Inc., Grumman Model G21A amphibian, N10020, on a scheduled flight, struck a submerged object in the water while making a takeoff. The pilot, with six passengers on board, continued the takeoff and landed the aircraft in water at the flight's destination. Fortunately, nobody was injured, even though two of the three watertight hull compartments had been extensively damaged; however, such landings in water are potentially and unnecessarily hazardous to the aircraft passengers and should be avoided when a land airport is available.

The pilot, in this case, was a certificated seaplane pilot, but was not qualified to land this type of aircraft on land. The company route structure encompasses only water landings; however, airports for landing are available for any emergency or precautionary landing, including such as might become advisable because of rapid changes in weather and sea conditions.

In reviewing the regulations applicable to air taxi operators and commercial operators of small aircraft, Part 135 of the Federal Aviation Regulations, we note that there is no requirement for Part 135 pilots to be qualified to land on both water and land in amphibious aircraft.

Accordingly, it is recommended that FAR Part 135 be amended so as to require pilots operating amphibious aircraft to be qualified to land on both water and land. It is further recommended that the involved

Honorable John H. Shaffer

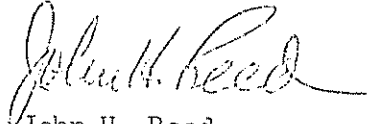
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operators be required to keep their pilots current on both types of landings.

Details of this accident have been discussed with personnel of your Flight Standards Service. Please do not hesitate to contact us if additional information is desired.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John H. Reed".

John H. Reed  
Chairman